

Historical and Theological Evolution of Russian Christianity from Ninth to Twentieth Centuries

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The theological understanding of the Russian Orthodox Church, in its course of development, has witnessed many shifts in the forms of expression of approaches and perspectives concerning theology in its historical road since the advent of Christianity in the Slavonic land in the 9th century. Russian Orthodoxy was never content simply to be a lesser form of Byzantine Christianity just because they received Christian faith from the Church of Byzantium. The national self-infatuation of Russia, which has been criticized as ‘the chronic disease of all Russian minds’[1], played a crucial role in the events occurring in the Russian Orthodox sphere of theology. The history of the Russian Church cannot be separated from that of the nation as it cannot be separated from her Byzantine origins concerning theological consciousness.

The official history of Christianity in Russia began with her adoption of Byzantine Orthodoxy in the last quarter of the 10th century, more precisely in the year 988 AD[2]. Although Russia received Christianity from the Byzantine Orthodox Church, they constantly attempted to assimilate their cultural elements into it to make their new religion as indigenous as possible. The history of Russian Christianity shows continuous and consistent efforts to express the Christian content of faith in their ways about spiritual, artistic, architectural, and all other aspects of the life of the Church.

Alexander Schmemmann comments, “Very soon after the so-called ‘Baptism of Russia’ under the Kievan Prince Vladimir, the traditions of Russian society, ecclesiastical architecture, and monasticism appeared”[3]. Their aspirations to indigenize Christianity contributed much to the Russian history from its advent until modern times, making the study of Russian Church history worthwhile and interesting.

The twentieth century was a crucial period in the history of Russia as a nation and of the Orthodox Church, both in the country and in the diaspora. The Russian Orthodox Church in the Diaspora witnessed a theological revival, which has significantly influenced the theological perspectives and the worldview of the whole of the Russian Church and Orthodox Theology in general. The revival shows us how Russian Orthodox Theology has drawn on the Patristic Tradition as they sought to articulate their vision in a rapidly changing world. The Patristic revival finally resulted in a paradigm shift in self-awareness and theological understanding as well as in the orientation of the Russian Church.

The Advent of Christianity in Russia

The official history of the Christian Church in Russia begins in 988 marked by the conversion and baptism of Prince Vladimir, who was canonized as a saint of the Russian Church in the 13th century[4]. He made Christianity the official religion of his dominions, but the exact time of the actual advent of Christianity before its official acceptance as the state religion is as yet disputed. One of the many theories about the earliest presence of Christianity in Russia attributes the credit of introducing the Christian faith to the Russian lands to the conversion of Rus’, a Scandinavian dynasty which ruled in Russia, under Patriarch Photius in the 9th century [5]. Another one claims that Christianity spread from Bulgaria, which was Christianized by the tireless efforts of Cyril and Methodius, causing

the Russians to have their earliest interaction with the Christian faith. Nikos Shivarov gives an account of such a possibility.

The Eastern Slavs were also able to acquaint themselves with Christianity when Russian merchants visited the Bulgarian Black Seaports, especially *en-route* to Constantinople. In the course of these contacts, the Russians and Greeks frequently required interpreters. They found them, in all probability, among the Bulgarians. It has long been known that the Treaty of 912 between the Russians and Byzantines was translated by a Bulgarian and from Greek to the ancient Bulgarian language. There is no doubt that these Bulgarian translators (of Slav origin) were Christians and zealots of Christian literature. Through them, the Christian mission also came to the Russians.

...It is an undoubted fact, however, that Prince Svyatoslav and his retinue came into direct contact with the Bulgarian Church and with centers of Bulgarian literature and learning, especially with Preslav. This took place, in particular, during his second campaign (969-71), when there was an alliance between the Russians and the Bulgarians [6].

In no way does either argument nullify or even reduce the significance of the conversion of Rus' in 988 and the official acceptance of Christianity by the Kievan Grand Prince Vladimir, it rather served as a platform for such a great historical event to occur. The reception of Christianity by Rus' caused the Christianization of the Eastern Slavs eventually resulted in the spread of Christianity among all the inhabitants of the area, which became the later Russian State. The tireless efforts of early Russian missionaries contributed to the Christianization of the huge population of the region.

The Socio-Cultural Impacts of Christianity in its Early Phase

The first phase in the history of Christianized Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church is defined as the Kievan Period which

ended with the conquest of Russia by the Tartars, a Mongolian tribe, that occurred between 1234 and 1240[7]. The impact of Christianity on Russian Culture in the Kievan period was very deep and significant. The advent of Byzantine Christianity constituted an opening of the whole of Russian society towards a different culture and way of living which they had never experienced before. Nicolas Zerenov articulates the situation very well:

The nation (Russia) had no tradition which could compete with Christianity. When the Russians were brought into the fellowship of the Orthodox Church, they were introduced into the superior world of Mediterranean civilization. ... The Church was for Russia his university, his theatre, his concert-hall and his picture gallery.[8]

The coming of the Byzantine form of Christianity had a profound impact on the socio-cultural development of Russia, promoting a Christian orientation in all its aspects. At the same time, it is interesting to note that even the introduction of a far more developed culture and religious tradition than what they had been before could not make the Russian Church a lesser form or a paler image of Byzantine Orthodoxy. The Church of Russia, especially in the early phase of its development, expressed an admirable level of originality in internalizing Christianity into the very culture and life of their nation and thus creating a Christian national identity. The reception of Christianity with childlike innocence and complete commitment paved the way for Christianization of the nation and the growth of the Church with a great level of originality.

Schmemmann beautifully summarizes the importance of Kievan Christianity for the whole history of the Russian Church, thus,

The unquestioned success of Christianity in Kyiv, that is to say, the “Russia” of the period as soon as it was imposed cannot be denied, whatever barriers there may have been. It is apparent, first of all, in the saints of the period, who reveals how profoundly and purely evangelical ideas were accepted and the whole rich experience of

Orthodox sanctity adopted there. ... Even during the first century in Kyiv, a spiritual community was created which left a deep impression not only on the Kievan period but on all subsequent eras of Russian religious development.[9]

Christian consciousness developed in the mind of the society of the Kievan period laid a strong foundation for the integral development of Russia in the later period. John Meyendorff speaks of the beauty and purity of the early Russian Christianity, "Russian Orthodoxy had a great sense of the ethical dimensions of Christianity, which discovered in the experience of the kenotic, suffering Christ, rather than the more dogmatic, Hellenized' and 'Orientalized' perceptions supposedly dominant in Byzantium".[10] The Kievan Christianity remains a great legacy for Russia's identity as a nation and of the Church.

The Nature and Development of the Russian Church and her Theology after the Kievan Period

The beauty of Christianity in the Kievan period was its purity, and the in-depth spiritual commitment expressed in all its naivety. While in many of the Christian nations of that time the Church was associated with the State. In Kyiv the state was associated with the Church, in a certain sense, and the state was kept united and guided by the moral influence of the Church. The close of that period left the Church somehow insignificant and inactive due to political instability[11], and later she became vulnerable to the effects of external and internal influences and factors. This prompted changes to occur in her consciousness, perspective, and relationship with the external world including the state in Russia.

Tartar Invasion and the Church

The Tartars were a subgroup of the Mongol hordes which emerged from their homeland in North-East central Asia and

conquered Russia in a series of wars starting in 1237. Even though their invasion was relatively short-lived; its impact was so severe that the whole of Russian history has been divided into two as before and after the invasion.[12] The Tartars had no interest in promoting any kind of religious system or ideology among the inhabitants of invaded lands. "The Tartar invasion did not interrupt Church tradition or halt the theological or spiritual tradition which allegedly began. But relations between the Church and state authority gradually changed." [13] The moral authority the Church used to hold on the function of the state was practically lost in the Tartar period. The Tartar period marked the dawn of a new challenging era for the Church to develop herself somehow independently from the functioning of the State.

Development of the Church under the Muscovite Empire

The city of Moscow was almost destroyed during the Tartar invasion and was re-built by Alexander Nevsky, the Grand Prince. Daniel, his son became the Ruler prince of Moscow and he with his diplomatic approaches developed Moscow into a great city where peace prevailed. His close association with the leaders of the Church also contributed significantly to the development of the city. Eventually, Moscow became the administrative centre of both the nation and of the Church during the reign of Ivan, son of Daniel who was enthroned in 1341 A.D. He received tremendous support from the ecclesiastical authorities of the time; Metropolitan Pater's (1308 – 1326) in particular played a crucial role in the concentration of power in Moscow.[14] Schmemmann observes that the transfer of the Metropolitan see from Kyiv caused some dissatisfaction in south-west Russia and resulted in a general decline of the moral influence of the Church in Russian society.[15]

The medieval concept of sacred kingship, which was unfamiliar to the Russians, began to be attributed to the Prince of Moscow; who

later became known as the Tsar or Emperor, during this period. The power concentrated in the hands of the Grand Prince of Moscow reached its zenith in the 15th century and by then the ruler assumed the title, 'Tsar of all Russia'.^[16] Within the Muscovite nation-state, the Church became independent from the Byzantine Patriarchate and Metropolitans and later Patriarchs began to be elected locally and became closely dependent on the state^[17]. One of the prominent reasons behind the Russian declaration of the independence of the Church was their rejection of the Florentine agreement ^[18] between the Patriarchates of Rome and Constantinople^[19]. The autocephaly was completely accepted by the Byzantine Church in 1448 when St. Jonah was elected to be the supreme head of the Russian Church.^[20] Schmemmann considered that this seriously affected the independent functioning of the Church. He writes: "We see the death of freedom first of all in the Church. The Theocratic Empire recognizes only the ultimate authority, the authority of the Emperor; besides it, the image of Metropolitan or Patriarch fades away and the voice of the Church grows weaker."^[21] However, the flourishing of monasticism in the Russian Church from the 14th century onwards, under the leadership of St. Sergius (1320 – 1392), can be viewed as a very positive aspect of the period. ^[22]

Historical Attempts to Westernize the Russian Church

Fascination towards the West began in Russian elite circles in the time of Grand Prince Ivan III (1440 - 1505).^[23] The Church of Russia had tended to maintain a hostile attitude towards whatever they considered as western.

To the fascination with the West on the upper levels, the Church responded with anathemas, not against Western heresies but against the west itself, simply because it was the West. ... Under such psychological conditions, free encounter or discussions were impossible. These two extremes in Russia's attitude towards the West, mortal fear or blind worship, persisted for a long time. ^[24]

The separation between the ‘Westernizers’ and those who resisted their attempts, who came to be known as Slavophiles since the 19th century, was a crisis for Russia as a nation and for the Church as well. “The Westernizers prefer what is alien and want to put it in the place of what is their own; the Slavophiles prefer their own and want to purify it and mark it off as separate from the alien.”[25] This tension between the Westernizers, who wanted to transplant the civilization of Western Europe into the Russian society and the Slavophiles who attempted to keep their originality, continued through centuries. Westernization of Russian Theology intensively started in the Metropolitan province of Kyiv due to its nearness and interaction with Poland and Lithuania, which earlier became centres of western European forms of Christianity, both Roman Catholic and Reformed. Westernization of the Kievan province of the Russian Church was intensified under the leadership of Metropolitan Peter Mogila (1596 – 1647), who was an ardent ‘westernizer’ due to his theological training in Poland. At the end of the 17th century the Kievan Collegium, which was started by Metropolitan Peter Mogila established a special “theological class” to teach Theology as a separate discipline. It was organized according to the Jesuit school system with Latin as the medium of instruction.[26] As a result of the encounters between Russian Orthodoxy and the West certain semi-official confessions of faith, namely, ‘Symbolic Books’ were published and propagated in the Russian Church. It was done to make western categories of theology familiar to the Russians.[27]

Schmemmann argues that even before the aggressive westernization in Russia introduced by Tsar Peter in the 18th century, the Church had been predominantly westernized.

The fathers of the new school theology were two obvious Latinists, Simeon of Polotsk and Paisii Ligarid. Jesuits appeared even in Moscow, The first schools opened in Moscow followed the model of Kieve, and when the time of Peter’s reforms arrived, Russian

theology would be already “Westernized”! The Church did not oppose these influences. There was no encounter of Orthodox Tradition with the West; it was the conquest of unarmed Orthodoxy of Latinism.[28]

Florovsky also holds an opinion similar to that of Schmemmann regarding western infiltrations into Russian Theology and criticizes the attempts at westernization more severely than Schmemmann even borrowing an expression “pseudomorphosis” from Oswald Spengler, a 19th-century German Historian.[29] Florovsky writes:

From the cultural and historical points of view, Kievan learning was not a mere passing episode but an event of unquestionable significance. This was the first outright encounter with the West. One might even have called it a free encounter had it not ended in captivity, or more precisely, surrender. But for this reason, there could be no creative use made of the encounter. A scholastic tradition was developed and a school began, yet no spiritually creative movement resulted. Instead, there emerged imitative and provincial scholasticism, in its literal sense a theological Scholastica or "school theology." This signified a new stage in the religious and cultural consciousness. But in the process theology was torn from its living roots. A malignant schism set in between life and thought. Certainly, the horizon of the Kievan Erudites was wide enough. Contact with Europe was lively, with word of current searching and trends in the West easily reaching Kyiv. Still, the aura of doom hovered over the entire movement, for it comprised a "pseudomorphism" of Russia's religious consciousness, a "pseudomorphosis" of Orthodox thought.[30]

This is a critical depiction of the plight of the Russian Church at the culmination of a long-lasting programme of westernization, which started in Kyiv in western Russia and was extended to the whole of the Church. The Russian Orthodox identity became a conglomeration of Byzantine, Slavonic, and Latin ecclesiastical elements meeting

together without proper integration, what Florovsky called the pseudomorphosis. “While a few individual thinkers were able to break out of this dominant paradigm, Russian religious thoughts remained captive to western influences until the beginning of the twentieth century.”[31]For Florovsky, the return to an authentic Orthodoxy, which is manifested in the life and writings of the Greek Fathers, was the greatest legacy of the Russian peoples. The Patristic revival of the 20th century was a reaction against this movement of westernization.

Anti-Westernization and the Slavophile Movement

Russian Theology witnessed two mutually disagreeing and competing approaches in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which were pro-western and anti-western. Both groups were represented by prominent Theologians who attempted to explore and expose Russia’s theological mind. The anti-western polemics of Russian Orthodoxy claimed to attempt a restoration of the original Russian ways of formulating theology, which they believed were lost due to the prolonged process of westernization. They are considered to be of the ‘Slavophile’ movement of which Alexi Stepanovich Khomyakov was the unquestioned and unchallenged leader.[32]Slavophiles considered Russia’s native Orthodox Christian religious tradition and identity to be the paramount component of Russia’s potential future spiritual development. Florovsky writes about Khomyakov: “He wanted to restate the Orthodox tradition in a new idiom which would be at the same time modern and traditional (i.e., in conformity with the teaching of the Fathers and with the continuous experience of the living Church). He wanted to liberate Russian Theology, firstly from the bondage of western scholasticism, which had been cultivated for a long time in the schools.”[33]Khomyakov’s theological position was more or less in agreement with the understanding of the protagonists of the Russian Orthodox Patristic revival occurring in the twentieth century, especially concerning the rejection of western elements in Russian Theology.

John H. Erickson summarizes the major aspects uniting the Theologians and other writers as following a Slavophile ideology: Slavophilism was by no means a cohesive movement. Practically every thinker and writer who has been identified as a Slavophile had his own special interests and points of emphasis. Linking them, however, was a preoccupation with (Russia's) national identity—with discovering it, with moulding it, ... In general, the Slavophiles liked to contrast the religious conceptions of Orthodoxy, as epitomized in *Russian Orthodoxy*, with ways in which Christianity had been deformed in the West.[34]

Common ground for all the prominent figures involved in the Slavophile movement, including theology, was their extreme antagonism towards the entire historical efforts aimed at westernization of the cultural and religious identity of Russia and a strong invocation of the definition of Russian identity without recourse to any occidental reminiscences. They are all united in their criticism of the "western captivity" of Russian theology, and in their desire to root theology again in the traditional sources: the Fathers, the liturgy, the indigenous culture, and the living spiritual experience of the Church.

Pro-Western Theological Position in Russia and the Influence of German Idealism

The position of the group of theologians and ecclesiastical figures who held a positive attitude towards the use of western ideas and methodologies in formulating theology could be summed up in the following words.

Orthodox theology must keep its patristic foundation, but it must also go "beyond" the Fathers if it is to respond to a new situation created by centuries of philosophical development. And in this new synthesis or reconstruction, the western philosophical tradition (source and mother of the Russian "religious philosophy" of the nineteenth and twentieth century's) rather than the Hellenic, must

supply theology with its conceptual framework. An attempt is thus made to "transpose" theology into a new "key," and this transposition is considered as the specific task and vocation of Russian theology.[35]

The qualification of Western Philosophy, as the 'source and mother of the Russian "religious philosophy" of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries' and reconstruction of Russian theology in the light of the same, exposes the position of the exponents of the pro-western movement in the Russian Theological sphere. That movement was not only influenced by the Latin form of theological representations, but also by German idealism which infiltrated into the mind of Russia together with Communist ideologies.

Theological perspectives were significantly influenced by the shadow of German idealism. Two major figures of the 19th century who brought idealism into Russian theology were Vladimir Solov'ev and Pavel Florensky. As an outcome of their influence, many Russian Christian writers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries tended to identify faith with rational understanding, considering faith as really the fullest development of our natural powers of knowing God. This tendency was an obvious outcome of the influence of German idealism.[36] Florovsky observes the onset of idealism in Russian Theology in the writings of GerasimOvski (1787 -1863), who was a Russian Orthodox Priest and Theologian.[37]

‘Sophiology’ of Sergei Bulgakov and the Position of the Church

Theological ideas overemphasizing the importance of *Sophia* Divine Wisdom appeared primarily in the writings which followed in the footprints of Vladimir Solov'ev, and Pavel Florensky. Sergei Bulgakov (1871–1944), a controversial Russian theologian of the 20th century, moved further in the same direction in developing the theological system of ‘Sophiology’. His approach was completely in line with German idealism and was inordinately influenced by the world

view of Marxism at the beginning of his philosophical career, but later made a radical shift towards Idealism. “In 1903, while lecturing at the University of Kyiv, Bulgakov admitted that he could no longer stand the strain of combining Marxism with idealism, with rational ethics based on the creativity of the personal subject. He, therefore, announced his conversion to idealism proper.”[38] In his Theological system, namely, Sophiology, Bulgakov argued that “the mediation between God and world is accomplished through the quasi-personal entity they call Sophia, the exact nature of which (or whom) has however never received a clear definition and has for this reason been open to charges of incompatibility with accepted Orthodox teaching.”[39] His preoccupation with Divine Wisdom (*Sophia*) as a cosmic principle [40] caused him to be charged with heterodoxy by the official Church and the majority of Russian Orthodox theologians of his time.

Elizabeth Theokritoff observed that Sophiology constituted a reaction against the tendencies of dualism developed in the western philosophical world:

It (the Sophiological movement) can be seen as a reaction against post-Enlightenment rationalism, against a dualism that opposes faith and reason, spiritual and empirical; and indeed it drew inspiration from Western reactions to those tendencies, such as the mysticism of Jacob Boehme and Schelling’s notions of Creator and creation ‘panentheism’ and ‘world soul’. The ‘pan-unity’ which these thinkers were seeking to recover raised a new question of God’s relationship to the world, and here they invoke the figure of ‘Sophia’, the divine Wisdom. As the ‘ideal personality of the world’, Sophia seems also to be in ontological continuity with the divine essence; this comes dangerously close to suggesting a fourth hypostasis of the Holy Trinity.[41]

Rowan Williams (former Archbishop of Canterbury) provides us with a slightly variant picture of Sophiology: “Bulgakov is careful to

clarify the point that *Sophia* is not a “hypostasis” and to purge out any residual pantheism. (For him) *Sophia* is not an objectified world soul, but the impulse in things towards harmony and order, towards complex unity of organization.”[42] The attempts Bulgakov made in the later period of his literary creativity did not spare him from condemnation by the Russian Orthodox Church.

The extravagant speculations of Sophiology, which was accused of having Gnostic and Neo-Platonic traits, were beyond what the Orthodox Church of Russia could accommodate. In 1924, Metropolitan Antony Kharpovitsky, the presiding Bishop of the Church in exile accused both Florensky and Bulgakov of adding *Sophia* as the fourth hypostasis of the Holy Trinity. Bulgakov was also accused of undervaluing the Christo-centric identity of the Church.

As the culmination of opposition and criticism emerged with a majority against Sophiology as non-Orthodox, the Episcopal Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church condemned the writings of Sergius Bulgakov in 1935, charging evident deviation from the biblical and patristic streams of theological understanding.[43] Bulgakov remained the last exponent of this controversial theological system and it eventually was forgotten by the theological academia and the Churches, both in Russian and in other parts of the world. Today Sophiology is mainly remembered through negative references in the writings of Georges Florovsky, who was probably the most outstanding among the Orthodox Theologians of the 20th century and an ardent critic of Bulgakov.[44]

Conclusion

The journey of Russian Christianity, from the ninth up to the dawn of the twentieth century was quite eventful and remarkable with complexities and evolutions occurring from time to time due to external and internal reasons. The first millennium of Russian

Christianity witnessed turmoil, brutal conquest, cultural, and ideological infiltrations of the western world into the naivety of Russian socio-cultural settings. The Russian religious psyche has been formed out of and conditioned by all the experiences of the nation together with its soul, the Orthodox Church of Russia. The socio-cultural identity of Russia in its pre-revolutionary period was a product of its interaction with different forms of Christianity, both Byzantine and Western, and modern European philosophical systems, especially German Idealism.

The dawn of the 20th century witnessed the tension between two directly opposing theological and cultural positions. The Slavophile movement, which sought to bring the whole of the Russian Identity culturally back to the sheer naivety of early Kievan Christianity, and the pro-western group which considered the western philosophical tradition as source and mother of the Russian religious philosophy of the nineteenth and twentieth century's.

The conflict between these two sharply disagreeing opinions served as the platform for many theologians who became shining stars in the sphere of Orthodox Theology in the twentieth century such as Georges Florovsky, Vladimir Lossky, and Nicholai Afanassieff. The theological development in the East had eventually lost its dynamic growth and undergone a kind of stagnation for many centuries in the second millennium. It caused the Orthodox theology to be generally limited to early literature and not directly related to the life of the Church in modern times. The theological and cultural discourses continuously occurred in the Russian Church.

The effective theological interactions made by the aforementioned great intellectuals and alike among the Russian émigré in the West in the last century made the West knowing more about the richness and beauty of the theology of the East. Thus, the

whole theological discourse that historically occurred in the Russian Orthodox Church became beneficial for the whole body of Christ.

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- [3] Alexander Schmemmann, *Ultimate Questions: An Anthology of Modern Russian Religious Vladimir's Thought* (New York: St Vladimir Seminary Press, 1977), 5.
- [4]Cross and Livingston, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*,1426.
- [5]Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, 293,294. Rus' was the name of a Scandinavian ethnic group who migrated to Kieve region and dominated there by 9th century. They were believed to be Swedish mercantile and warier tribe who established themselves in Kyiv and founded the Russian Principality. The name Rus' could be a derivative of the Scandinavian name for Sweden, *Ruotsi*. Online Etymological Dictionary, <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php>
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- [7]Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*,302.

- [8] Nicolas Zerenov, *The Russians and Their Church* (London: SPCK, 1968), 16,17.
- [9]Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, 295, 296.
- [10] John Meyendorff, *Rome Constantinople Moscow: Historical and Theological Studies* (New York: St. Vladimir Seminary Press, 1996) 122.
- [11] Political stability in the Kievan period was mainly depending on the charismatic leadership of the grand prince and acceptance of him among the people. Conflict within the dynasty brought political instability into the reign. Zerenov, *The Russians and Their Church*, 10.
- [12]Zerenov, *The Russians and Their Church*, 20.
- [13]Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*,302.
- [14]Zerenov, *The Russians and Their Church*, 34,35.
- [15]Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*,303.
- [16]Zerenov, *The Russians and Their Church*, 47.
- [17] John Meyendorff, *Rome Constantinople Moscow*, 124, 127, 128.
- [18] Florentine agreement Between the Pope of Rome and the Patriarch of Constantinople which came out as a result of the Council of Florence held between 1438 – 45 was something reconciling the Roman Catholic Church and the Churches in Communion with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The agreement was opposed by certain Bishops of the Church of Constantinople and the union established was ceased when Turks conquered Constantinople in 1453. The specific reason for the Russians to abstain from accepting the Florentine agreement is not known. Most likely it could be because of their negative attitude towards the west. The opposition raised by certain senior bishops

under the Patriarchate like Mark of Ephesus might have influenced the decision of the Russians. Cross and Livingston, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 619.

[19] Cross and Livingston, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 1426.

[20] Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, 313.

[21] Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, 313.

[22] Zerenov, *The Russians and Their Church*, 38; Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, 306.

[23] Schmemmann, *The Historical Road*, 320.

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[25] Vladimir Weidlè, "Russia and the West", in *Ultimate Questions: An Anthology of Modern Russian Religious Thought* (ed. Alexander Schmemmann; New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1977) 20.

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- [36] Aiden Nichols, *Light From the East*, 29, 30.
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